

THIS BRIDGE IS PART OF THE THEMATIC NOMINATION
"MASONRY ARCH BRIDGES OF KANSAS"

*For a copy of that thematic nomination,
see thematic nomination file in
Architectural Historian's office.*

5/9/85

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**

historic Morton County WPA Bridge (Masonry Arch Bridges of Kansas TR)

and or common Morton County WPA Bridge

2. Locationstreet & number Six miles west and four miles north of Richfield n/a not for publicationcity, town Richfield x vicinity of

state Kansas code 20 county Morton code 129

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <u>x</u> public | <u>x</u> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| <u>x</u> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <u>x</u> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial | <u>x</u> transportation |
| | n/a | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Morton County

street & number Morton County Courthouse

city, town Elkhart n/a vicinity of state Kansas**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Morton County Courthouse

city, town Elkhart state Kansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveystitle Inventory of Historic Bridges--
Kansas Dept. of Transportation has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes x nodate 1980-83 ☐ federal x state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Kansas State Historical Society

city, town Topeka state Kansas

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Morton County W.P.A. Bridge spans Bear Creek six miles west and four miles north of Richfield, Kansas. The five span stone arch bridge is 96 feet long and 28 feet wide curb to curb. The roadway level is 16 feet above the water level. It is in good condition.

Each of the stone arches springs from and is disposed between two abutments, or piers of limestone. These piers project beyond the stone spandrel wall and are capped with dressed limestone. Each arch is crowned with a tri-sectioned keystone. The stone spandrel walls retain the earthen fill which loads the arch. This fill allows for even distribution of the live loads and helps to strengthen the arch. The stone railings are located on both sides of the floor line and are capped with dressed limestone. Drains are incorporated into the bridge railings above each arch.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates [1936] Builder/Architect Works Progress Administration

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Morton County W.P.A. Bridge retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling and association. It embodies distinctive characteristics of a type and method of construction no longer being used, namely the construction of a roadway supported by a stone arch which is loaded by an earthen fill which in turn, is retained by stone spandrel walls.

The stone arch bridge was popular in Kansas from the beginning of settlement through the 1930s. A major reason for this was the fact that limestone was usually locally available. A larger amount of the money expended for the construction could be retained within the area to be served than would be possible with the metal structures. It was also possible to use local workers and expertise on the project. The use of local stone and labor makes each example unique and particularly well suited to its environment. No stone arch bridges are currently being built in the state.

Its significance as a stone arch bridge is supplemented by the fact it also represents the operations of the Works Progress Administration and one of its "make work" projects. As one of the main objects of such construction was to provide employment for as many men as possible, the projects were labor intensive. The result was a bridge that is more highly finished and more monumental in appearance than the rubble type structures. Roy Brown, former county engineer currently residing in Richfield, reported that the stone for the bridge came from Stanton county and that the W.P.A. project foreman was Paul Heyman, Sr.

Due to the fact it was erected near the end of stone arch bridge popularity, it represents the evolution of the style. In addition to its significance as a type of bridge no longer being constructed it is a memorial to the beneficial aspects of the New Deal program. As such, it is indicative of a period of time which formed the society in which we now live.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Morton County to Receive Additional Highway Work," Elkhart Tri State News,
October 29, 1936.
Interview, Roy Brown, July 29, 1983.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre.

Quadrangle name Richfield SW, Kans.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property shall consist of a rectangle created by the 28
foot wide and 96 foot long structure.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Larry Jochims, Research Historian, and Michael Snell

organization Kansas State Historical Society

date 2/20/85

street & number 120 West 10th Street

telephone 913-296-2973

city or town Topeka

state Kansas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national X state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society date 9--8--86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

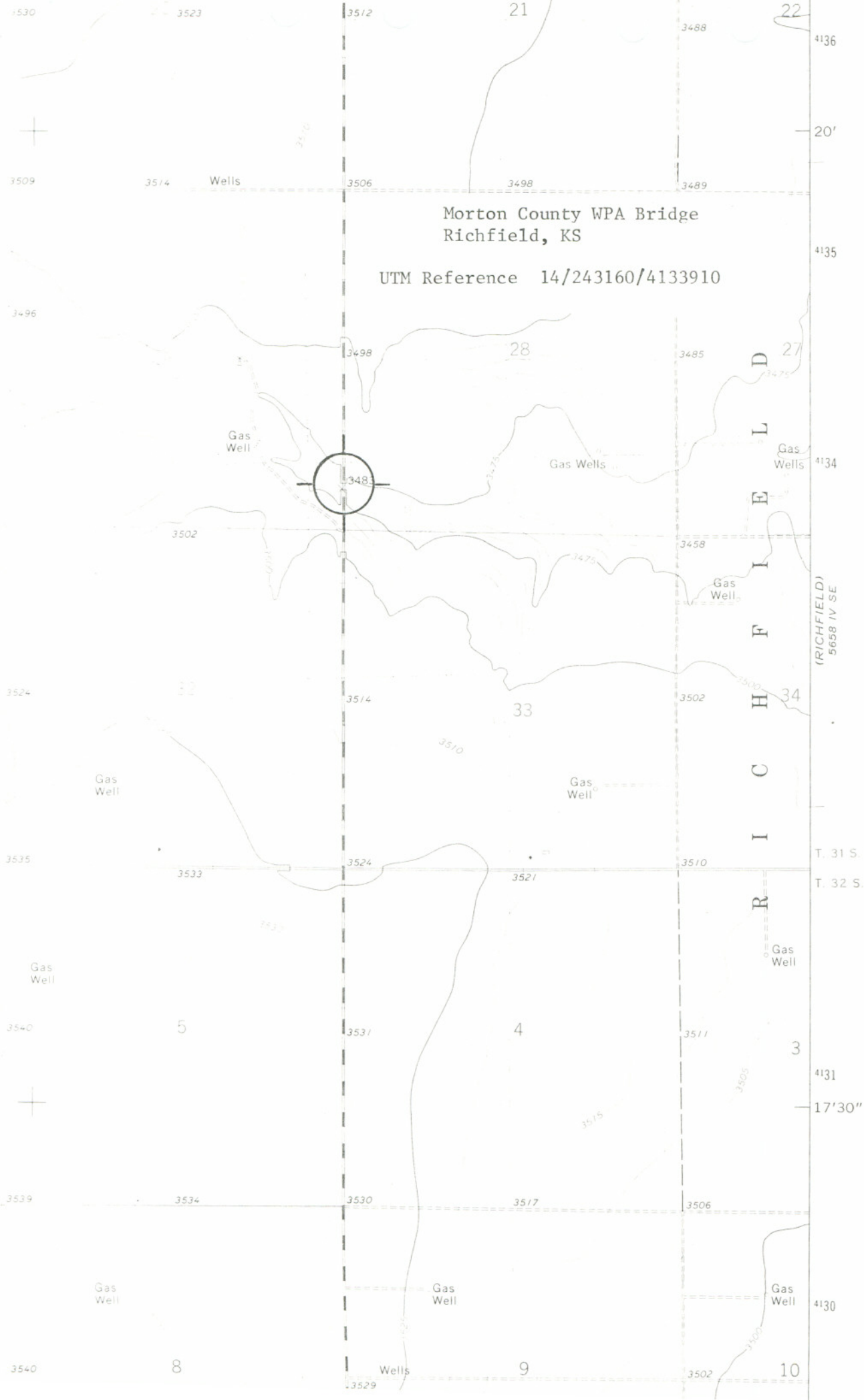
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



Morton County WPA Bridge
Richfield, KS

UTM Reference 14/243160/4133910

RICHFIELD
5658 IV SE
T. 31 S.
T. 32 S.